



Nation Ford Land Trust *Spring 2022* Newsletter

Chairwoman Address—Janice Chism

As the newly-elected Chair of Nation Ford Land Trust's Board of Directors, I'd like to briefly introduce myself. My family came to Rock Hill from California in 1989. My husband, Bill Rogers, and I taught biology at Winthrop University until we retired in 2020. We raised two kids in Rock Hill and became deeply fond of our new home here in York County.

I am an ecologist and conservation biologist who studied monkeys in Africa. Since 2001 I have worked in the Peruvian Amazon Rainforest with Winthrop students. We have helped local residents in a communal reserve on the Tahuayo River develop effective strategies to protect local forests and wildlife while allowing appropriate and sustainable use of forest resources. The years in Peru and Africa taught me the critical lesson that everyone who cares about conservation of land and wildlife eventually learns: only when local people have lead roles in planning and carrying out conservation efforts will these succeed. This applies just as much to conservation in York County as it does in the Amazon.

I've been a member of the NFLT board since 2017 and the Board's Vice Chair for the last three years. In 2020, I had the honor of signing NFLT's easement for the Catawba Bend Preserve, most of which will be devoted to public recreational use. This January, I attended the kickoff bonfire board member Allison Love arranged to introduce the Lake Wylie community to the new conservation easement, Woodend Farm. I want to commend our Executive Director Steve Hamilton, his able stewardship assistant, Megan Mahoney, and all of our board members, for how hard they worked during these trying last two years to make these happen. I especially want to thank Bernie Ackerman, our Chair Emeritus, for his leadership during these years and for helping me grow into my new role.

NFLT plans to continue to expand its conservation easements in this rapidly growing area. This past year, in addition to the deeply-felt loss of our founding member, Murray White, several of our long-serving board members decided to retire from the board, including Jeanne Ferguson, Jetter Pittman and Lee Whitley. Over the next months we will be welcoming some new faces to the board and we look forward to the energy and new ideas they will bring.

Thanks so much to all of you, our members and sponsors for your continued support and encouragement. I look forward to working with you and for you to help NFLT fulfill its mission to help conserve the beautiful land around us.



Inside this issue

Letter from Exec. Director	2
Founders Trail Cleanup	2
NFLT Upcoming Events.....	2
Woodend Farm	3
Clover Rock Outcrop	3

Special points of interest

- Janice Chism became the new Chairwoman of NFLT in February after Bernie Ackerman's term as Chairman ended
- NFLT announced Woodend Farm as a new conservation easement near the end of the year
- Nation Ford Land Trust will be hosting two events in the coming spring: a bird watch walk with Dr. Bill Rogers and a nature walk on one of NFLT's own conservation easements, Moonshine Prairie, led by NFLT easement owner and conservationist Andrew Lazenby

2022 Spring Sponsors



Craig Craze, Steven Sibley, Michael and Cheryl Hill, Will Close, Derick and Sally Close, Joyce White, David Anderson, Richard Marriott, Nation Ford Chemical, Harry Dalton, Frances Close, Patrick White, Dr. Douglas Hansen, Westminster Presbyterian Church

Mission

To preserve the open spaces, natural beauty, and scenic heritage of the York County, South Carolina area.

Board

Dr. Janice Chism – *Chair*

Patrick White – *Vice Chair*

Dan Love – *Treasurer*

Kathy Pender – *Secretary*

Bernard Ackerman

John Hiott

Allison Love

Will Close

Perry Johnston

James Smith

In Memoriam, Murry White, Jr.

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The Nation Ford Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1989. The board of directors is a dedicated group of volunteers who support the land trust's mission and seek opportunities to further its land conservation efforts.

Acres presently protected by

NFLT: 15,356 acres

A Letter from Our Executive Director—Steve Hamilton



This Spring brings us much to celebrate! Thanks to the Bethel-Lake Wylie Land Acquisition and Preservation Parks District, our two latest acquisitions are the 86-acre Woodend Farm and the 47-acre "Thistle One" property. With these two new conservation easements, NFLT now protects over 15,300 acres. Additionally, Nation Ford Land Trust will celebrate its 33rd birthday this year!

We've come a long way over the years, and we've never been more ready for the challenges that lie ahead. In the next few months, NFLT hopes to convince more York County folks to join the more than 100 people and sponsors who already support our land trust. Our aim is to keep growing the land trust and strengthening people's understanding that protected lands aren't just nice to have. To the contrary, they are essential for the healthy wellbeing of our communities. Being part of land conservation allows people to make a tangible difference in helping with issues, including overdevelopment, diminished biodiversity and access to nature.

Our accreditation process, with The Land Trust Alliance, is proceeding. We are going through the rigorous application process and are targeting the Spring of 2023 for completion.

I look forward to partnering with York County Forever, Bethel-Lake Wylie Land Acquisition and Preservation Parks District, and the South Carolina Conservation Bank to bring more projects and conserve more land in York County and surrounding counties in the coming months and years.



Founders Trail Cleanup

On November 13th, 2021, fifteen volunteers from the Rock Hill Striders Group helped repair and clean the trail. With the help of trash bags, weed-eaters, brooms, and sweat, our 2.3-mile trail looked brand-new after a couple hours. Thank you again, Rock Hill Striders!

NFLT Upcoming Events

May 7th—Bird Watching with Dr. Bill Rogers

Dr. William "Bill" Rogers, a Winthrop University biology professor, will be directing a small group along the trails at the **Anne Springs Close Greenway** on **May 7th at 10AM** to spot any local species of birds for a couple hours. Any participants should go through the *Dairy Barn entrance and park in the back of the gravel lot*. If you don't have a Greenway membership, be aware that you will need to pay a **\$12 day fee** (\$6 if between 5-12). Birdwatchers are encouraged to bring their own equipment (binoculars are recommended).

May 21st—Moonshine Prairie Nature Walk

Andrew Lazenby, the landowner and conservation easement owner of **Moonshine Prairie**, will be leading a walk through the 70-acre property along moderate terrain on **May 21st at 10AM**. Moonshine Prairie is mainly known for the experimental Piedmont Prairies Andrew has planted. Andrew graduated from Winthrop University with a degree in biology and is a board member for Katawba Valley Land Trust in Lancaster County. This walk is perfect for any botany or nature photography enthusiasts!

If you wish to participate in any events by Nation Ford Land Trust, please be sure to RSVP by calling us at **(803)-547-8140** or emailing us at nationfordlandtrust@gmail.com.

One of Our New Easements Just Released!

Woodend Farm

Situated in the heart of Lake Wylie, Woodend Farm is 86 acres of woodland, open fields and former pastures, a horse stable and a prominent home situated on a elevated point of the property. This project never would have happened without the Bethel-Lake Wylie Land Acquisition and Preservation Parks District and the continued support of York County Forever and the South Carolina Conservation Bank. The land features two large scenic ponds and several trails throughout the property's grasslands and forest. While the property is visually stunning, it is also an environmental priority for Lake Wylie water quality. A small stream flows through the west side of the property that empties into one of the many tributaries of Lake Wylie and even contributes to several acres of wetlands in neighboring parcels south of the property.



The land had been owned by the Van Every family, of snack food Lance Co. fame, for many years and is located along Hwy

557 across from Oakridge Middle School. The property was purchased by York County through a special tax initiative in Lake Wylie's District 2 where the citizens of Lake Wylie fund greenspace projects. This initiative was created in an effort to stem the development boom within the Lake Wylie area. With this effort, the Bethel-Lake Wylie area will be able to purchase needed greenspace areas for parks and other community amenities. Additionally, the property was placed into a conservation easement which will protect the land in perpetuity. While the specific activities on the property are still under discussion, the property will only be used for passive recreation for the public to enjoy.



Photo: County Councilmember Allison Love with NFLT's Steve Hamilton at the "kickoff" bonfire in January

Highlighting One of Our Current Conservation Easements

The Clover Outcrop

Within the town limits of Clover, the site known as the Clover Rock Outcrop is a 10-acre granite flat rock owned by York County and placed into an easement in 2009. The majority of the easement, around 85%, is covered in this rare rock ecological environment. The site contains several endangered flora species, like *amphianthus pusillus* and Black-spored quillwort (pictured right). Due to the rolling landscape, the granite outcroppings create dips that periodically collect soil over time that are the only habitat for some species. The environment is full of flora specialized for drought conditions because of the few trees that are able to grow on the outcrop. It is important to minimize the amount of accumulated litter because it affects the outcrop's effectiveness as a habitat because trash collects in the dips inside of sorely needed soil.



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Nation Ford Land Trust

Nation Ford Land Trust is dedicated to the preservation of open spaces, natural beauty, and the scenic heritage of the York County, South Carolina area. Preserving these qualities will ensure that as our home grows, it retains the qualities that have made it a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family.

Nation Ford Land Trust is a 501 (c)(3) organization.

Nation Ford Land Trust Membership

The Nation Ford Land Trust depends on its members to help further its mission to enhance the quality of life in the York County area by preserving its open spaces, natural beauty, and scenic heritage. We continue to look for opportunities to partner with the York County Forever Commission on conservation easements, as well as land purchases that provide public access. We are also working with landowners on a variety of conservation projects on private lands, including easements. Your membership will be used to protect land with significant conservation value through projects such as these.

The protection of open space with significant conservation and public value is crucial as our region faces unprecedented growth. Recent studies indicate that if growth continues at the current rate in the southeast, urban sprawl will engulf thousands of acres of forest and agricultural lands from Raleigh, North Carolina to Atlanta, Georgia within the next 50 years. Charlotte and its surrounding counties, including York County, are directly in this path. To donate to the Nation Ford Land Trust or to become a member, please visit our website at **www.nationfordlandtrust.org**.

We accept online donations through PayPal and major credit cards and mail-in donations through our membership form with a check sent to our P.O. box at **P.O. Box 1273 Fort Mill, SC 29716**.